

Region 4 Advisory Council Full Members Meeting

January 20, 2015
Hartford DCF Office
250 Hamilton Street
Hartford, CT

Members Present: Deb Batsie, Sarah Becker, Mary Burke, Tim Carroll, Liz Bryden, Marline Cosme, Alice Farrell, Bryan Flint, Wayne Johnson (DCF), Winston Johnson, Lorna Little, Beth Landolina (DCF), Chris Lau (DCF), Donna Maitland-Ward (DCF), Alana Parkinson, Malika Robledo, Charlette Scott (DCF), Chantel Thomas (DCF), Jeanette White (DCF), Rosemary Wieworka (DCF), Tammy Harris-Wilson (DCF), Judi Orlando, Amanda Beane (DCF) Lisette Rodriguez (DCF)

Voting Members Absent: Bryden, Liz; Blue, Terrance; Brown, Sophia; Caban-Hernandez, Janier; Kearney, Diane; Dufresne, Alexandra; Farinella, Ivy; Glynn, Hector; Hunter, Colinda; Lebron, Nick; Perez, Salina; Robles, Josie; Roundtree, Regina; Schiessl, Kathy; Stone, Martha; Velez, Maritza; Wilson, Beresford

The DCF Region 4 RAC meeting was held at the Hartford DCF office from 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM. This meeting is for the full membership & DCF Staff.

Overview of Meeting

The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss updating the website, early childhood initiative, Choice/Magnet schools, Membership and committee reports, Legislative Proposal ideas and the Connect grant update.

Introductions

Minutes review

- The November minutes were approved

Website-update

- Region 4 RAC website has been updated
- Minutes and Committee Recommendation Protocol are on the website
- Beth is waiting for Wayne to update the membership terms and will then add the membership info to the website
- Recommendation is to include as many resources as possible

Early Childhood Initiative Presentation by Donna Maitland-Ward

- Leadership choose the Early Childhood initiative
- Early childhood initiative means better outcomes for children
- Special act 14-22, CT is moving in the right direction
- Act 14-22 is effective on July 1st 2014 requires all children ages 3-5 in an Out of Home setting must be enrolled in a preschool or kindergarten program
- Our children have no data yet-statewide 104 children
- With our new IT system we will be able to collect more data
- DCF's program is collaboration with Head Start program, Early childhood community of practice draft policy and practice guide in the final draft with legal department, submission of report to the General Assembly on 12/30/14 2 day early
- Region 4 is ahead of the curve
- Region 4 expectations are children to be enrolled, education records in place, (Chantel makes sure a link education record is started for each child) Head Start registration onsite monthly (Foster Parents are encouraged to come and register), out posted workers at the Head Start locations in the region, strong liaison presence at both sites, and strong management support for the collaborative
- Challenges are: accurate data, available eligible slots statewide, transportation costs, preschool program schedules,
- Next steps are to finalize and vetting of new DCF policy & practice guide-with legal now
- Continue to partner with community Early Child Care Programs, local BOE and the office of Early Childhood
- Head Start is going into the community to reach out and fill slots
- Head Start does make DCF children a priority

CHOICE/Magnet Schools Presentation by Chantel Thomas

- Martha Stone asked the question (at an earlier meeting) of low enrollment of DCF children?
- 2 plans have been developed to increase enrollment
- Choice catalogs have been handed out
- 315 children in Hartford but we need to remove the children already enrolled in CHOICE schools
- How to track what applications are done? How many students applied?
- Apply online-pdf file was emailed to the PM, SWS and SW
- Using access to track if application is done and what schools were applied for
- If an application is incomplete a reason must be given
- More updates need to be made to the education record in Link
- 2/27 is the deadline for Magnet school applications
- Program Managers will receive a report on children in their workgroup's applications
- The lottery goes until 2/27
- Program Managers sent in an email that there is help filling out the applications for young parents with school age children

- I the catalog on page 3 , after you choose 5 schools also choose the option to fill used slots
- Children 3-4 years old will get transportation to the suburbs
- The first week they will need to find their own transportation
- When application is submitted then SW must send Chantel and email
- After the lottery Foster Parents need to send an email to Chantel
- How many children applied and the outcomes
- SW must keep a log to check status of the applications
- What is the plan for the child-if plan is reunification, what are the child's interest
- Grade child is currently in, there is more space in the transition grade
- State Dept. of Education site will tell how well a school is performing
- Maintaining children in CHOIC schools is difficult

Membership/Committee Reports

- Membership committee met 2 times since the last meeting
- Getting membership list up to date and membership form will be sent out to update information
- New form to ask people to join or come back
- Gift card will be at the next meeting
- Will find out about the \$1200/\$1500 dollars for the next meeting
- Community partnership/Providers-4 people on the committee
- Need to integrate providers and family members into permanency team
- Beth to send list of providers that took the Permanency training to Malika & Kathy Schiessl
- Region 4 has been going to training for the Permanency Teaming Model
- Providers have also attended this training
- Permanency subcommittee (Alice, Charlette and Liz) could work with Malika's team
- Permanency CQI team meeting was last Thursday, they have put in writing what they have been working on
- The next Perm CQI meeting is Feb 19th @ 1:30 in Manchester
- Permanency subcommittee to attend the next Permanency CQI meeting
- Healthy Development met-we want to prioritize
- Need clarification from DCF as to what areas the Department is focusing on
- Prevention had not met for 2 months-Brian, Natalie Day, Amanda Beane, Barrett Seymour will be meeting soon
- Professional Development is finalizing the plan for the remaining forums on the cross cutting themes
- Learning forum this March will be on improving Leadership and Creating a Learning Environment. The last learning forum will be on improving Community Partnerships with the Community Partnership Committee
- Five or six topics were prioritized by the committee from topics identified by the workgroups. They will be sent to the Executive team for review and then the team will coordinate the trainings with the managers to prioritize them for the year

- Supervisor feedback tool was sent out in January and should be done this week but extended it for lack of participation
- Department issued staff satisfaction survey and just got the results back
- Any preliminary results that tie in with the professional development
- A lot of comments that there is not a lot of professional development opportunities
- Rose Wieworka will share a summary of the results from the staff survey around professional development

RAC Recommendation Protocol

- RAC recommendations: coversheet and instructions were voted on and passed
- These are now on the website

Legislative Proposal Ideas

- Invitation from Martha and her group to work to come up with ideas
- Any ideas from the RAC??

Connect Grant Update

- Everyone had their events
- Money has been spent
- East of the River on 12/10 held a Meet and Greet @ Nomads-10 providers and 93 people attended
- 4 families were connected with services & gift cards were distributed
- A lot of good events out there

Misc.

- DCF website needs to be updated-a lot of phone numbers wrong too
- Can invite David Brennon to a meeting
- Bring errors that you know of to the next meeting
- EMPS-CT
- Next meeting is Voting members only

The Region 4 RAC full membership meeting was adjourned at 2:00 PM

Submitted by,
Terry Hall